



3150 SW 52nd Ave., Ste. 203
Pembroke Park, FL 33023



PRSRT STD
US Postage
PAID
Dodd Printers

ACTION 10

2010 SPONSORED BILLS

HB 57 - EARLY VOTING

Authorizes supervisor of elections to establish early voting hours for each county. (Died in Governmental Affairs Policy Committee)

HB 59 – ATHLETIC COACHES

Requires the independent sanctioning authority of a youth athletic team to screen the background of current and prospective athletic coaches through designated state and federal sex offender registries. (Passed; Effective Date: July 1, 2010)

HB 77 - FLORIDA ENERGY AND CLIMATE COMMISSION

Requires commission to prepare report on energy efficiency with respect to low-income households & rental housing properties to be submitted to Legislature by specified date; provides report requirements. (Died in Military & Local Affairs Policy Committee)

HB 163 – PREPAID WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE

This bill removes requirements for a feasibility study on collecting an E911 fee for prepaid wireless service and extends the date for assessment or collection of a fee to July 2013. (Passed; Effective Date: July 1, 2010)

HB 1225 - SEWAGE DISPOSAL FACILITIES

Requires facilities contributing domestic wastewater to facilities discharging through ocean outfalls to meet specified reuse requirements if they divert such flows from those facilities discharging through ocean outfalls. (Passed; Effective Date: July 1, 2010)

HB 1615 – STATE PROCUREMENT

Expands provisions relating to procurement of products & materials with recycled content by DMS & other state agencies to include procurement of remanufactured products, equipment, & instruments; provides procedures & requirements with respect to such procurement; requires DMS to adopt specified rules; defines "remanufactured"; provides additional requirement upon decision by DMS not to procure recycled or remanufactured products, materials, equipment, or instruments. (Died in Governmental Affairs Policy Committee)

HELPFUL TIPS

Where can I go to find out more information on Bills/Legislation?

The Senate Web Site at www.flsenate.gov and the House site at www.myfloridahouse.gov are good first steps for information on the legislation that passed and the reasoning behind it.

REDISTRICTING

I am proud to have led the debate against House Joint Resolution 7231, a proposed constitutional amendment regarding the establishment of legislative and congressional districts.

If approved by the voters this November, advocates of the constitutional amendment claimed it would clarify questions and legal concerns with Amendments 5 and 6, two FairDistricts initiatives already approved for the November 2010 ballot. In my view, HJR 7231 isn't necessary; it would severely undercut the FairDistricts initiatives, which are placed on the ballot after 1.7 million Floridians signed petitions seeking to reform Florida's controversial reapportionment process.

The constitutional amendments are of critical concern to me because the 2012 redistricting of legislative and congressional districts could prove pivotal to the long-term political leadership of our state.



State Representative Joe Gibbons

ACTION 10

Summer 2010



DISTRICT 105 ADDRESS:

3150 SW 52nd Avenue
Suite 203
Pembroke Park, FL 33023
(954) 893-5006

CAPITOL ADDRESS:

1402 The Capitol
402 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 488-0145
joe.gibbons@myfloridahouse.gov

COMMITTEES:

Energy & Utilities Policy
Committee Democratic
Ranking Member
Full Appropriations Council
on Education & Economic
Development
Full Appropriations Council
on General Government &
Health Care
Joint Legislative Budget
Commission
Select Committee on Semi-
nole Indian Compact
Review
Transportation & Economic
Development Appropriations
Committee

Dear Neighbor:

Representing your interests in the Florida House of Representatives continues to be a welcomed challenge and a rewarding privilege. I appreciate your vote of confidence and enjoy serving House District 105.

As many of you know, while much of the country is recovering from the recession, Florida continues to face many economic hurdles. Therefore, during the 2010 legislative session, my colleagues and I focused much of our attention on economic development and job creation. In addition, we confronted a number of issues important to District 105, including Florida's budget, education, and health care of Floridians.

Keeping in touch with my constituents is important to me, so this is one more way I can make sure you have access to vital state government information. I hope you find this legislative update to be a useful source of information on the 2010 session.

Please feel free to contact my office with questions, comments or concerns relating to state government. I welcome your feedback; it helps me to serve you in the best way I can.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you.

Sincerely,

Joseph "Joe" Gibbons
State Representative
Florida House District 105



IMPROVING EDUCATION

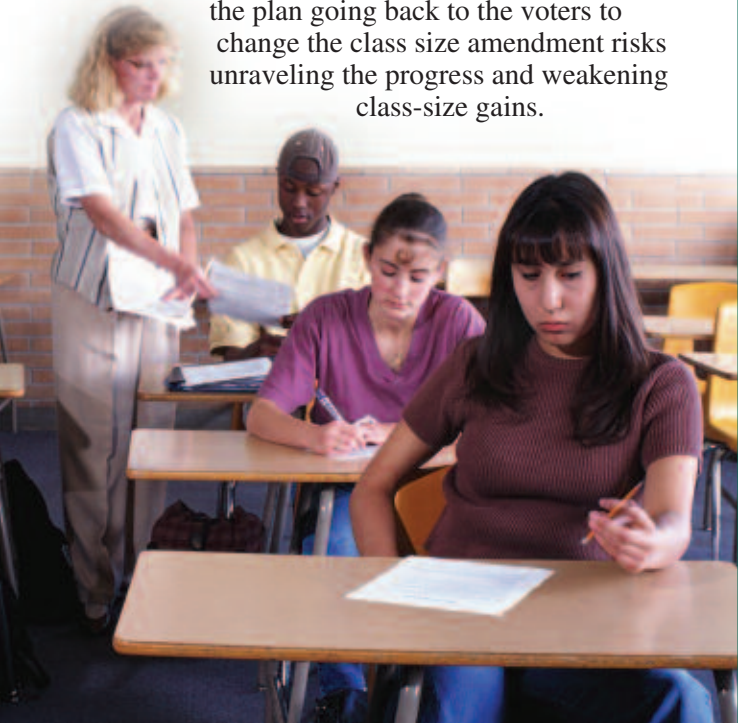
I believe improving public education is the first step toward creating high-wage jobs and a quality workforce the 21st Century economy demands. That’s why I supported significant educational reforms this legislative session and fought hard for greater funding for our schools.

I don’t think the state budget approved by the Legislature holds education harmless. It increases the average per-student spending by \$1.22. School officials say their expenses, including insurance, retirement and utilities, will outstrip that increase. The budget also allows for university tuition hikes of up to 15 percent, just as it cuts scholarship awards under Bright Futures.

I am proud to have joined my colleagues in arguing against Senate Bill 6, the nationally watched measure dealing with teacher contracts that Governor Crist vetoed. Florida’s teachers deserve our respect, as well as fair, justifiable pay. In my view, it would have punished our school teachers and harmed education in our state.

Also during this session, Governor Crist signed Senate Bill 4, a bipartisan measure that raises educational standards, improves accountability and advances some of the reforms touted this year by some members of the Florida House Democratic Caucus. Senate Bill 4 phases out the high school Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test in math, science and writing. The bill also introduces end-of-course exams in Algebra 1, Geometry and Biology 1.

Florida has made great strides in improving education since voters passed the Class Size Reduction Act. As a result, schools are less crowded. In 2002, the average classroom size for PreK-3 was 23; today it is 16. The average classroom size for grades 4-8 was 24; today it is 19. The average classroom size for grades 9-12 was 24; today it is 22. This November, voters will be asked to revisit the class size goals. I believe the plan going back to the voters to change the class size amendment risks unraveling the progress and weakening class-size gains.



THE 2010 FLORIDA BUDGET

The state budget approved on the final day of the 2010 session included funding for many important local and statewide projects; but it fails, in my opinion, to meet the needs of Floridians. Therefore, I voted against the \$70.4 billion spending plan, and I have urged Governor Charlie Crist to veto at least portions of the financial package.

The budget makes college more expensive. It also makes state roads more crowded, doesn’t improve health outcomes for all people, and fails to make job creation the top priority.

Granted, it was a huge challenge this year to write a budget. The Legislature began the session facing a \$3 billion shortfall. Thankfully, our state was able to rely upon another \$2.3 billion in federal stimulus money approved last year by President Obama and Congress along with another \$270 million in assistance that Congress is expected to approve. A new gaming compact with the Seminole Indian tribe also helps to balance the budget with a projected \$433 million in revenues for the state.

I am disappointed that the Legislature approved a budget that was projected to lead to the loss of potentially thousands of jobs throughout Florida due to the decision to shift \$160 million from the state’s transportation trust fund to other spending. I opposed that decision, and I am pleased that Governor Charlie Crist vetoed that shift in funds.

The budget also makes cuts to a highly successful program that helps new mothers considered at risk for abusing or neglecting their children. A \$10 million cut to the Healthy Families program amounts to more than a third of its budget. Roughly 3,500 of more than 8,700 families are expected to be dropped from the program.

Healthy Start coalitions, which serve at-risk pregnant women and infants, will see a cut of \$2.6 million. Additionally, contributions to county health departments are cut by \$10.5 million.

In my opinion, the budget doesn’t hold education harmless. While it increases the annual per-student funding by \$1.22, school officials say their expenses, including insurance, retirement and utilities, will outstrip that increase. In terms of overall school funding, this budget presents the second worst per-student funding level since 2006. The budget also includes whopping new university tuition hikes of up to 15 percent, just as it cuts scholarship awards under the Bright Futures program.

It’s also of serious concern to me that funding for nursing homes and hospitals are cut, including a seven percent reduction in state payments or the care of indigent patients.

SUPPORTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Throughout the legislative session, I supported policies to promote the development of renewable energy resources and the jobs that will be created in that growing economic sector. To encourage development of new markets for sustainable, renewable energy, I supported smart investments in important public works projects within communities throughout the state.

But given Florida’s budgetary crisis, the Legislature had to be prudent and resourceful. That’s why I backed a bipartisan effort to make clean-energy technology accessible to homeowners and businesses. Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing, the heart of HB 7179, provides local governments the flexibility to create programs to lend funds to homeowners or businesses. These funds can be used to pay for improvements, such as solar panels, high-efficiency water heaters, and storm hardening for their homes. The loans can be repaid over time depending on the amount and specific terms of the loan and can also be repaid as part of a participating homeowner’s property tax bill.

Another good program I strongly supported started this year. From April 16 – 25, Florida residents were able to receive a rebate on the purchase of energy-efficient appliances. This program was a big success. Consumers saved money on the purchase price of the designated ENERGY STAR appliances. They also will save money each month on their energy and water bills. Retailers all over Florida benefitted through the large increase in sales of appliances. Sales exceeded \$62 million with over \$4 million in sales taxes collected.



PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH CREATING JOBS

I was proud this session to support new policies promoting the recovery of our state’s economy. For me, job creation for Floridians was job number one.

It was important to me to meet the expectations of Florida’s families and businesses who asked the Legislature to encourage new business growth, promote job creation and remove barriers to economic growth.

I supported legislation to keep Floridians working, prevent layoffs and to bring a measure of economic stability to the state. For instance, we passed a bill on the first day of session to hold down a dramatic increase in unemployment tax rates for businesses for the next two years. These increases would have resulted in layoffs for many Floridians.

The Legislature also passed a \$200 million jobs package over three years) to make Florida more economically competitive and to encourage companies to invest in our state and hire Floridians.

Throughout the session, I supported various efforts that help Florida consumers, including a reinstatement of the state’s back-to-school sales tax holiday that benefits Florida’s families. The tax holiday provides a one-time, three-day sales tax holiday for clothing and other school supplies purchased from August 13-15, 2010.



HEALTHCARE

Health care for Floridians was among my major priorities during the session. Though we were able to provide funding for many basic health services during a tough budget year, I am deeply disappointed by cuts to programs for our most vulnerable residents.

I am thrilled that legislation was approved to crack down on the corrupt “pill mills” operating around the state. Pain clinics, especially in South Florida, attract patients from all over the country who come to abuse our state’s system. To curb this problem, we worked to increase regulation for pain clinics and for physicians who own or work in such clinics. We added criminal and financial penalties to the law to give law enforcement and prosecutors needed tools to crack down on this growing problem.

The topic of women’s reproductive rights surfaced in the final days of the session. I opposed a final version of House Bill 1143, which included two controversial components: a statutory ban on health insurance “mandates” and a provision requiring a woman to undergo and view an ultrasound before having an abortion during the first trimester. I am hopeful Governor Charlie Crist vetoes this legislation.



These dollars belong to Florida’s taxpayers who deserve some of it back as they stretch their hard-earned dollars to ensure their children have needed school supplies. Additionally, the tax relief measure will help spur growth in our vital retail economy. This year’s back-to-school tax holiday is expanded to include pens, pencils, notebooks, notebook paper, rulers, glue, binders, lunch boxes, construction paper, markers and folders.

These are tough economic times, but we must provide for roads, bridges and courtrooms, protect our natural resources, provide for law enforcement and prisons, and fund our schools so we may soon have a world-class education system for students and educators.